

Church of the Covenant

Boston, MA



Second Sunday of Easter

Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

[ZOOM LINK \(click here\)](#)



Church of the Covenant

April 11, 2021 10:30 am

Second Sunday of Easter

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTllpTTEvRGNZUT09>

Welcome & Announcements

One: Peace be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Many: **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Prelude

Call To Worship

One: The women whispered as they left the tomb,

Many: **“Alleluia! Jesus is risen!”**

One: They insisted from outside the Upper Room,

Many: **“Alleluia! Jesus is risen!”**

One: We join their hymn and sing,

Many: **Alleluia! Jesus is risen indeed.**

Kindling the Christ Light

Opening Hymn: NCH (black) 233

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!

Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!

Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!

Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!

Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!

Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!

Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!

Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!

Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!
Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!
Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!
Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!

Prayer for Grounding in God's Grace

Many: **God of empty tombs: when we hesitate to speak of your hope, forgive us, and give us voice. When we find it difficult to love another, forgive us, and give us new compassion. When we do not hear the witness of others, forgive us, and redirect our attention to those who are too often forgotten. When we stay locked behind our fears and doubts, forgive us, and send us out to share your grace.**

One: Let us now open ourselves to God in silent prayer...

Listening to God in Silent Prayer

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Christ comes into every shadowed corner of our lives with the light of Easter. Christ comes into the locked rooms of our faults, and gifts us with grace and hope. Christ comes to fill us with peace, that we may proclaim the good news of mercy and forgiveness. Therefore, let us celebrate:

Many: **In Jesus Christ we are set free and made whole.
Alleluia, Amen!**

Sung Response:

Easter Celtic Alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia, a - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia, a - le - lu - ia!

Scripture Reading

Gospel Reading: John 20: 19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Religious Leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw Adonai. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As God has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.'

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Sermon

When Doors are Closed

Call to Offering

Online Giving Option: <http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>

Click on Give Now, then choose Pledges or Gifts-General

Offertory

Doxology

Though what we have in truth is small.
God's grace shall be enough for all.
So as we bless and break this bread.
Each heart be filled each mouth be fed.

Prayer of Dedication

Celebrations and Concerns

One: God, in your grace,
Many: **Receive our prayer.**

Pastoral Prayer

***Hymn:** PH (blue) 104

Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna!

Christ is risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days!
Christ is risen! Hush in wonder: All creation is amazed.
In the desert all surrounding, See a spreading tree has grown.
Healing leaves of grace abounding, Bring a taste of love unknown.

Christ is risen! Raise your spirits, From the caverns of despair.
Walk with gladness in the morning. See what love can do and dare.
Drink the wine of resurrection, Not a servant, but a friend.
Jesus is our strong companion. Joy and peace shall never end.

Christ is risen! Earth and heaven, Never-more shall be the same.
Break the bread of new creation, Where the world is still in pain.
Tell its grim, demonic chorus: “Christ is risen! Get you gone!”
God the First and Last is with us. Sing Hosanna, everyone!

Charge and Benediction

Exchange of the Peace

(Please exchange greetings of Christ’s peace and reconciliation)

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*Church of the Covenant is focused on following Jesus in our world through accompaniment,
compassion, peace, joy and creative beauty.*

We are passionate about hospitality, committed to justice, and wild about faith.

We embrace an embodied spirituality that is not afraid of questions.

*We advocate for a just climate for our earth, liberation in our world, and equality in our
neighborhoods.*

*We are a community where ALL are welcome and celebrated as beautiful reflections of God –all
genders, all faiths, all orientations, all backgrounds, all abilities, all ages, all struggles, and all hopes.*

Come journey with us!

COVER IMAGE: *Light Wave*, by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Inspired by John 3:14-21 | Acrylic painting with gold leaf on canvas

Participating in Today’s Worship

Preaching – Rev. Brian Ellison, Covenant Network of Presbyterians

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Liturgists – Karen Henry & Rev. Rob Mark

Vocalists – Tom Reid, Betsy Groves, Tim Groves, Barbara Darling, David
McKinney, Kathryn Barry, Nancy Stockford, Anita Gram, Christine James,
Mocky Day, Sarah Perrault, Theodor Langenbruch, Arnold Rots,
Rachel Case

Redline Brass – Kyle Spraker, Trumpet; Andrew Moreschi, Trumpet; Nick
Rubenstein, French Horn; Philip Hyman, Bass Trombone; Michael
Tybursky, Bass Trombone

WELCOME & PEACE BE WITH YOU IN THESE DAYS! We are delighted to welcome you to our community of faith here at Church of the Covenant! Thank you for joining us in worship. While we lament that we can't greet you in person we are so glad you are with us today. We still feel deeply connected in the Spirit's blessing. As we all continue to do our part to love our neighbor as ourselves to help counter COVID-19, our building remains closed; all meetings and events that are offered, including worship, have shifted to an online or conference call format. We are grateful for the technology that allows the majority of us to gather together online. And in faith and through God's ceaseless, amazing grace—as we practice “social distancing” we also practice “spiritual nearing” to each other and the Sweet Holy Spirit.

GBIO LISTENING SESSIONS TODAY AFTER WORSHIP: The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization has a long history of working on social justice issues that are of deep concern to its member organizations. Now that GBIO been “refounded” with about 20 new member organizations, it is sponsoring “Listening Sessions,” to hear about what most concerns you and why. Here at Covenant, we will begin by holding 2 to 3 sessions this Sunday, a few minutes after church. We will be invited to share, in confidence, our worries, our hopes and fears. We will hold several of these sessions during April and May. Then in June we will begin the process of pulling all our stories together and working to shape an agenda for 2022 and beyond. If you would like to join us simply stay on the Zoom and you will be randomly assigned to a small group led by Covenant's GBIO Team members.

CREW INTERFAITH CLIMATE SUMMIT TODAY: Healing, Helping and Building Resilience: Today, Sunday, April 11, 2pm: [Click here to register.](#)

UPCOMING WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS: Please join us each Sunday at 10:30 am as we come together in community through Zoom to pray, sing, share celebrations and concerns, and hear God's still-speaking Word proclaimed.

- April 11, Guest Preacher, Rev. Brian Ellison from Covenant Network / GBIO Listening Session
- April 18, Presbytery of Boston led worship service / Vegan Potluck
- April 25, Earth Sunday service led by New England Youth Collaborative / GBIO Listening Session
- May 2, Rev. Rob preaching, Baptism of Hannah Miller Waters

Zoom link for each Sunday: <https://zoom.us/j/91025989890?pwd=VTd0L3VMc3ErRDBRTlplTTEvRGZUT09>

VIGILS FOR FLOYD JUSTICE DAILY NOON: Our nation is currently gripped by a monumental trial connected to George Floyd's murder at the hands of police. To show up for racial justice in these days, our Climate Jubilee Team is inviting us to join in on daily prayer vigils each day at noon, for justice, for peace. Members will be standing in vigil outside our sanctuary a few times each week at noon with signs. We will vigil in silence for 9 minutes and 29 seconds to mark the time George Floyd was pinned to the ground by a police officer's knee. Please join us in solidarity from wherever you are each day at noon starting this week for the duration of the trial. We recommend setting a recurring alarm if helpful to join as often as you can in the spirit of prayer and solidarity.

IN CASE OF MAJOR TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES DURING WORSHIP: Should any major technical glitches arise during worship and Zoom become challenged / the meeting end before worship is over, please relocate to our YouTube livestream page where a new livestream will start up: [youtube.com/channel/UCUgqWdRTyqb0yeOpR3x6UYA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUgqWdRTyqb0yeOpR3x6UYA) In the case of minor technological glitches (your mic doesn't work, your video doesn't seem to work), feel free to reach out to any church staff member for assistance.

STAFF SCHEDULES & VACATIONS: Our Minister of Music Tom Handel is taking vacation from COTC work to focus on teaching responsibilities April 5-27, and will not be replying to messages during this time. Lead Pastor Rob Mark will be away on vacation the week of school vacation April 19-26.

CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH PROGRAMMING: Each Sunday beginning at 9:45 we gather using Zoom for Godly Play and Youth Class. Our Godly Play class gathers to sing, share news with each other, pray together, and hear ancient and contemporary stories of our faith. Our Youth Class shares their weekly gathering rituals and explores topics of interest and curiosity in faith and identity. If you need a Zoom link, email children@cotcbos.org or contact Rev. Kate at kate.carlisle@cotcbos.org.

20s-30s-40s GROUP AT COVENANT: We have a vital group for young adults, young professionals and students – and we'd love you to join us! We currently hold brunches (virtual for the time-being) on the third Sunday of each month – our next one is April 18. If you would like to be added to our email list, or connect one-to-one, please contact Rev. Joshua at joshua.lazard@cotcbos.org

BIBLE STUDY - FRIDAYS 11AM: Our virtual Bible Study is meeting at 11:00 am on Fridays, studying the Gospel of Mark. Questions? Please contact Nancy Ammerman at ntammerman@gmail.com. We gather on Zoom for about an hour for a “BYOB” (bring your own Bible) gathering. Drop in any week! No homework required! <https://zoom.us/j/104478666?pwd=MHAwdEY5VVNvdVFkbVA1R2U3Z3NnUT09>
join by phone: (646) 558 8656, Meeting ID: 104 478 666, Password: 581626

EASTER EVENING PRAYERS 4/14 and 4/28: Join us on two Wednesdays this month (April 14 and April 28) during this Easter season from 6-6:30pm for our evening prayer service. As we did in Lent, if you’d like to help choose a reading for either of these services, please [email](#). Zoom link for each Wednesday: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88999202076?pwd=bU9XQ0JuR0F1bXhrTUV2eVBDcHIxdz09>

COVENANT BOOK DISCUSSION: Covenant’s book group will meet by Zoom on Sunday, April 25, at 5 PM to discuss the book [Dear White Christians](#) by Jennifer Harvey. As always, you are welcome whether or not you have read any of the book and whether or not you have ever attended a Covenant book discussion. For more information [email Barbara](#); Zoom link forthcoming.

EARTH DAY BOSTON 2021: Evelyn Kimber is once again helping connect is with this year’s [Earth Day Boston](#) 2021 free virtual event on Thursday, April 22, 7-8 PM. [Tune in here!](#) Rev. Rob has the honor of giving the invocation. The 50th anniversary of Earth Day last year revitalized the date as a day of action and events to heal and protect the environment and raise the alarm for the climate crisis. National Earth Day and Earth Day Boston were established to bring people together in this effort that impacts every living thing. Covenant is actively engaged as a Partner in both national and local organizing teams.

CLIMATE POTLUCK 4/18: Covenant will celebrate Earth Month on Sunday, April 18, following a Presbytery led worship service, and by virtually sharing an after-service Plant-Based Meal and Discussion on how food choices impact the environment and climate change. Covenant’s longtime vegans will be on hand for an “Ask Anything Q & A” about making a shift towards living more plant-based. Please bring along something vegan to eat and “show off” 😊 if willing.

EARTH SUNDAY 4/25: On Sunday April 25, the New England youth collaborative (GLOW) will lead us in an Earth Sunday worship service at 10:30am.

FREE TREES!! & ARBOR DAY ADULT ED 5/2: Following up on an adult ed session in March, our Climate Jubilee Team is teaming up with Boston's Speak for the Trees and offering free tree seedlings to anyone who is interested: Persimmon, Fraiser Fir, Bur Oak, White Oak, and Black Tupelo. On Saturday, May 1, we will be safely handing these out from the steps of COTC. Drop offs also available. Please [email Betty Southwick](mailto:betty@comcast.net) if interested. Climate Jubilee will also host another adult ed session following worship on May 2 in connection to Arbor Day.

MOTHER'S DAY WALK FOR PEACE MAY 9, 9am: The annual **Louis D. Brown Peace Institute** of Dorchester, will be doing their annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace again virtually. But this year you can also commit to walking each day for 25 days starting the day after Easter, in solidarity. This Walk is the Institute's major public fundraiser of the year. Please consider supporting the important resurrection work they do all year: support and healing to those who have lost a family member to homicide and to those families on the other side, support to community trying to heal, and work to prevent any further violence. The Peace Institute stands in the dark places, and brings true light, through its stated principles: **Love, Unity, Faith, Hope, Courage, Justice, and Forgiveness**. Knowing that vulnerable populations are hit much harder by our current situation, and aware of the extra pain of those who normally found the community and solidarity of the Walk to be an escape from personal isolation and grief, **please give what you can here on the Church of the Covenant Team page**, or send a check to Louis D. Brown Peace Institute at the address [here](#). Contact Diane Lauber with any questions dianelauber@comcast.net or 978-376-6574. Thank you!!

VACCINATIONS: As we all know, our Commonwealth is in the process of ensuring everyone gets a COVID-19 vaccine according to MA/CDC guidelines/phasing – yet the process can feel a bit daunting and frustrating, with real inequities unearthed. **There is a [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov) site by the Commonwealth where you can pre-register to be alerted when you are eligible and when there is availability.** If you are feeling confused, you are not alone, and we are here to help. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Rob, Joshua, Kate or our Deacons if you could use some help. And remember, even in the face of a long history of unequal health care access, we at COTC deeply believe in the importance and efficacy of this vaccine as a necessary next step in reaching public health. Here are some helpful websites: <https://www.macovidvaccines.com/> and <https://www.cic-health.com/vaccines-location#fenway> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>

WHAT CAN I DO ONCE VACCINATED? As we give thanks that increasing numbers of people are getting vaccinated, many are asking this question, here are a few guidelines:

[CDC Guidelines](#)

[Interactive Risk Assessment Tool](#)

FACING OUR RACISM WORKSHOP: Our friends at Co-operative Metropolitan Ministry are organizing an excellent few hours long workshop, join Rev. Rob, \$45 (scholarships available – please ask Rob), “Facing Our Racism: Becoming Conscious Partners” on Sunday, May 16, noon-4:30pm – [click here to register](#).

A CHALLENGING SEASON & MOTHER’S DAY CARDS: One way we can help those experiencing homelessness in downtown Boston is to support our partners Women’s Lunch Place, who have an ongoing wish list for items, found here: <https://womenslunchplace.org/in-kind-donations>. You can also support WLP by [purchasing beautiful Mother’s Day cards](#) designed by WLP guest Darcy.

ARE YOU OR ANYONE YOU KNOW FACING FINANCIAL CHALLENGES? Info on fuel and electricity discounts in MA available [here](#).

CONTINUED GIVING: Even in face of important, life-giving changes, our COTC ministry remains moving full steam ahead. Our staff and pastors continue to be hard at work. Our building continues to be faithfully stewarded. Our deacons and pastors continue to carry out vital pastoral care in these days. Therefore, your continued generosity and giving to help support the work of our church community is even more valued in these challenging days. And we are deeply grateful for your tangible signs of generosity. Here are a few ways you can continue to financially support the church and its ministries:

1. Directly on our website: <http://www.cotcbos.org/give.html>
2. Download free app: GivePlus (GIVE+ by Vanco Services, LLC) in the App Store, Google Play, or at <https://giveplushelp.vancopayments.com>, then type in our zip code 02116 to find Church of the Covenant
Both online options allow you to make a one-time or a recurring gift
3. If you are uncomfortable with online giving, yes, you can still mail checks!

WEEKLY CALENDAR Click here to view the weekly calendar of events.



Church of the Covenant
Boston Massachusetts

67 Newbury St., Boston MA 02116 | (617) 266-7480 | www.cotcbos.org

Worship at Church of the Covenant is the heart and soul of our life together as a community of faith. Since 1932 we have been a federated church, maintaining membership in the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church (USA) and welcoming pilgrims and inquirers from all traditions to our life and work. Through our prayer and praise, in our concerns and celebrations, by word and sacrament, art and silence, we seek empowerment, together and individually, as a covenant people, for the work of Christ.

Jesus taught that the Spirit invites all people, including society's outcasts, to enjoy seats at God's table. This congregation seeks to demonstrate that vision by welcoming individuals and families without regard to race, gender identity, age, physical/mental condition, or sexual orientation. We rejoice in the presence of children among us, and we strive to include them in our ministry. We maintain ties of faith with the Church of the Poor in the community of the Sweet Name of Jesus, in Northwestern Nicaragua.

We believe God's blessings are found in marriage equality for all. Thus, we joyfully welcome the opportunity afforded us by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the United Church of Christ and the Presbyterian Church USA to join couples of all sexual orientations in fully legal and holy marriage.

In our worship we use language and imagery that reflect the wonderful diversity of the image of God in humanity and all of creation; that transcend the exclusive language of the church's past. And as stewards, we seek to live into the Spirit's blessing as we move in solidarity on this shared and sacred, common home we call earth. We invite you to join us in the journey toward God's justice and peace for all of Boston and beyond!

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Rob Mark, *Lead Pastor*

Rev. Joshua Lazard, *Associate Pastor*

Thomas Handel, *Minister of Music*

Bill Brown, *Building Manager*

Rev. Kate Carlisle, *CYCE Coordinator / Parish Administrator*

Nancy Stockford, *Financial Secretary*

Fred Lopes, *Sunday Sexton*

Anita Goncalves, *Child Care Provider*

Alan Lane, *Food Cupboard Coordinator*

CHURCH OFFICERS

Liz Vizza, *President of the Corporation*

Trudi Veldman, *Clerk of the Council*

Anita Gram, *Moderator of Board of Deacons*

Faith Perry, *Treasurer*